

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CARACA 02273 01 OF 02 091919Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 A-01 OPR-02 INR-10 CIAE-00
PA-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SY-05 USSS-00 /049 W
-----038283 091954Z /41
R 091200Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO USIA WHASDC
SECSTATE WASHDC 1494

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 CARACAS 2273

USIAC

USIA FOR ILA

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT: BACKGROUND MATERIAL FOR PRESS -
GRAN MARISCAL DE AYACUCHO

PART ONE DEALS WITH VISITS TO VENEZUELA BY PERSONS WHO WERE OR
BECAME PRESIDENTS OF THE U.S. PART TWO WITH SITES:

1. PART ONE:

A. RICHARD NIXON VISITED CARACAS MAY 13, 1958, WHEN HE WAS
VICE PRESIDENT. VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS TOOK PLACE DURING HIS
ARRIVAL AND TRIP INTO THE CITY. THE ENTIRE OFFICIAL PARTY WAS
SHOWERED WITH SPITTLE BEFORE LEAVING THE AIRPORT AND THE
VENEZUELAN MILITARY GUARD OF HONOR HAD TO CLEAR DEMONSTRATORS
AWAY FROM THE OFFICIAL CAR BEFORE IT COULD LEAVE THE AIRPORT.
THE OFFICIAL PARTY WAS STOPPED AT A ROAD BLOCK ON THE WAY INTO
THE CITY AND IT APPEARED LIKELY THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT'S
CAR WOULD BE OVERTURNED, BUT A QUICK-THINKING CHAUFFEUR
TURNED ONTO A SIDE STREET, AVOIDING WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A
FATAL OCCURRENCE. THE WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY AT THE NATIONAL
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CARACA 02273 01 OF 02 091919Z

PANTHEON WAS CANCELLED AND CONSIDERATION WAS GIVEN TO CANCELLING
THE ENTIRE VISIT AND HAVING THE VICE PRESIDENT LEAVE CARACAS
VIA HELICOPTER. GOVERNMENT JUNTA MEMBER EUGENIO MENDOZA, ONE
OF VENEZUELA'S LEADING INDUSTRIALISTS, PERSUADED NIXON TO
REMAIN AND TO ATTEND A LUNCHEON WITH ALL MEMBERS OF THE
GOVERNMENT THE NEXT DAY. THAT EVENING SCORES OF SENIOR
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS CAME TO THE EMBASSY RESIDENCE TO EXPRESS

THEIR PERSONAL REGRET OVER THE INCIDENTS. THERE REPORTEDLY WAS INADEQUATE POLICE PROTECTION ON ARRIVAL, PERHAPS OWING TO THE DISORGANIZED AND UNDERMANNED CONDITION OF SECURITY FORCES FOLLOWING THE JANUARY 23, 1958 OVERTHROW OF DICTATOR MARCOS PEREZ HIMENEZ, BUT TROOPS LINED THE ROADS ON DEPARTURE AND THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS.

B. PRESIDENT KENNEDY VISITED VENEZUELA DECEMBER 16-18, 1971. THERE WERE SERIOUS GUERRILLA AND TERRORIST PROBLEMS AT THE TIME, BUT PRESIDENT BETANCOURT GUARANTEED KENNEDY'S SAFETY. THE ARMY WAS MOBILIZED AND 40,000 TROOPS WERE PLACED ON DUTY IN CARACAS. THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS OF AN UNTOWARD NATURE ASIDE FROM A SMALL NUMBER OF DEMONSTRATORS WHO WERE WELL-BEHAVED. AS PART OF THE VISIT, THE OFFICIAL PARTY HELICOPTERED TO AN AGRARIAN REFORM PROJECT IN ARAGUA STATE. THE PROJECT, LA MORITA, WAS A MODEL FOR THE NEWLY BEGUN AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM. BETANCOURT AND KENNEDY WERE PERSONALLY CLOSE AND MET TOGETHER THREE OR FOUR TIMES DURING THE VISITS. BETANCOURT CAME TO THE U.S. ON A STATE VISIT FEBRUARY 21-24, 1963.

2. PART TWO:

A. PANTEON NACIONAL (NATIONAL PANTHEON): THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY WAS DESIGNED IN A GOTHIC STYLE IN 1740 AND CONSTRUCTION WAS COMPLETED IN JUNE OF 1783. IN JULY OF THAT SAME YEAR IT WAS CONSECRATED. THE CHURCH WAS COMPLETELY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 CARACA 02273 01 OF 02 091919Z

DESTROYED DURING THE EARTHQUAKE OF MARCH, 1812. ITS RECONSTRUCTION BEGAN NINE YEARS LATER, IN AN OGIVAL STYLE. IN MARCH 1874, PRESIDENT GUZMAN BLANCO DECREED THAT THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY BECOME THE NATIONAL PANTHEON. HE ORDERED THAT ALL RENOVATIONS BE TERMINATED BY OCTOBER 28, 1875, THE DATE SET FOR ITS INAUGURATION. BOLIVAR'S REMAINS WERE BROUGHT TO THE PANTHEON ON OCTOBER 28, 1877, AND PLACED IN THE CENTRAL NAVE OF THE CHURCH. IN 1929, DURING THE PRESIDENCY OF DR. JUAN BAUTISTA PEREZ, SOME IMPORTANT ALTERATIONS WERE CARRIED OUT WHICH GREATLY CHANGED THE FACADE AND THE INTERIOR, SHOWING SPANISH RENAISSANCE STYLE. BESIDES BEING THE FINAL RESTING PLACE OF THE REMAINS OF THE LEADERS OF THE VENEZUELAN INDEPENDENCE AND OF OTHER EMINENT VENEZUELAN, THE PANTHEON HAS SEVEN MONUMENTS DEDICATED TO NATIONAL HEROES SIMON BOLIVAR, GENERALISIMO MIRANDA, GRAN MARISCAL DE AYACUCHO (GENERAL JOSE ANTONIO SUCRE) GENERAL JOSE GREGORIO MONAGES, GENERAL JOSE RAFAEL URDANETA, DR. JOSE MARIS VARGAS, GENERAL JOSE ANTONIO PAEZ; AND THE MONUMENT TO THE FEDERATION. THERE ARE ALSO NUMEROUS TOKENS OF FRIENDSHIP AND GRATITUDE FROM OTHER AMERICAN REPUBLICS. IN 1936 TITO SALAS BEGAN THE MURALS WHICH ADORN THE WALLS OF THE PANTHEON.

B. EL CAPITOLIO (THE CAPITOL OR LEGISLATIVE PALACE): THIS BUILDING WAS CONSTRUCTED IN TWO STAGES: THE LEGISLATIVE PALACE WAS BUILT IN 1873, AND THE FEDERAL PALACE WAS FINISHED IN 1877 UNDER THE DIRECTION OF HURTADO MANRIQUE, LUCIANO URDANETA, ROBERTO GARCIA, ESTEBAN RICARD AND MUNOZ TEBAR. THE LEGISLATIVE PALACE HOUSES THE SENATE CHAMBER AND THE HOUSE OF DEPUTIES. IT WAS CONSTRUCTED IN 114 DAYS, DURING THE FIRST PRESIDENCY OF GUZMAN BLANCO WHO INAUGURATED IT WITH THE PRESENTATION OF HIS FIRST MESSAGE TO CONGRESS. THE SEMI-CIRCULAR FORM WAS ADDED IN 1892 UNDER THE DIRECTION OF LUCIANO URDANETA AND ANTONIO MALAUSENA. THE FEDERAL PALACE, AT ONE TIME USED BY THE HIGH FEDERAL AND APPEALS COURT, IS CURRENTLY USED BY OFFICERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS. THE CORINTHIAN STYLE DOMINATES THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 CARACA 02273 01 OF 02 091919Z

BUILDING. THERE ARE TWO LATERAL COLONNADES AND A CENTRAL ONE IN THE FORM OF AN ELLIPSE WHICH IS PART OF THE SALON ELIPTICO (ELLIPTICAL HALL). THE LATERAL COLONNADES CORRESPOND TO THE TRIPTYCH HALL AND THE ESCUTCHEON HALL.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CARACA 02273 02 OF 02 091801Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 A-01 OPR-02 INR-10 CIAE-00
PA-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SY-05 USSS-00 /049 W
-----036948 091953Z /41

R 091200Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO USIA WASHDC
SECSTATE WASHDC 1495

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 CARACAS 2273

THE DOME OF THE ELLIPTICAL HALL WAS BUILT IN BELGIUM AND INSTALLED IN 1890. THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST CONGRESS OF JULY 5, 1811, ARE KEPT THERE. THIS DOCUMENT IS IN A CRYSTAL ARK WHICH IN TURN IS IN A BLACK MARBLE COFFER WHERE THE GOLD KEY WHICH OPENS BOLIVAR'S SARCOPHAGOUS IS KEPT.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC IS THE GUARDIAN OF THIS KEY;
HE PASSES IT ON TO HIS SUCCESSOR AT THE END OF HIS TERM.
IN THIS SAME HALL IS THE FAMOUS MURAL BY TOVAR Y TOVAR OF
THE BATTLE OF CARABOBO, A DECISIVE BATTLE IN THE STRUGGLE
FOR VENEZUELA'S INDEPENDENCE.THERE ARE OTHER PAINTINGS BY
THE SAME ARTIST AS WELL AS BY CRISTOBAL MENDOZA, TITO SALAS
AND OTHERS, AND AN IMPORTANT ICONOGRAPHIC COLLECTION OF
BOLIVAR.

C. LA CASONA: LA CASONA, THE OFFICIAL RESIDENCE OF
VENEZUELA'S PRESIDENT, IS A COLONIAL HOUSE PURCHASED AND
RESTORED BY THE GOVERNMENT DURING THE ADMINISTRATION OF
PRESIDENT RAUL LEONI (1964-69). IN COLONIAL TIMES IT
BELONGED ORIGINALLY TO A FAMILY BY THE NAME OF LARRALDE DE
LA MADRIZ. THERE WAS NO OFFICIAL RESIDENCE FOR PRESIDENTS
DURING MOST OF VENEZUELA'S HISTORY. MOST PRESIDENTS HAVE
LIVED IN THEIR OWN HOMES. THERE WERE EXCEPTIONS, HOWEVER;
MIRAFLORES PALACE, WHICH HOUSES THE EXECUTIVE OFFICES OF
THE PRESIDENT, ONCE SERVED AS A RESIDENCE. AND THE CASA
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CARACA 02273 02 OF 02 091801Z

AMARILLA, WHERE THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IS LOCATED, ALSO
SERVED AS A RESIDENCE AT ONE TIME.

D. PALACIO DE MIRAFLORES (MIRAFLORES PALACE): GENERAL
JOAQUIN CRESPO ORDERED THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PALACE AS
HIS PERSONAL RESIDENCE DURING HIS FIRST TERM AS PRESIDENT,
IN 1884. WORK BEGAN UNDER THE DIRECTION OF ORDI DE
MONTEBELLO AND CONTINUED UNTIL 1886. THREE YEARS LATER,
WHEN CRESPO RETURNED TO POWER IN 1889, THAT CONSTRUCTION
BEGAN ONCE AGAIN. AT THIS TIME THE ARCHITECT JUAN BAUTISTA
SALES WAS IN CHARGE AND LATER THE ENGINEER HURTADO MANRIQUE.
THE SPANISH PAINTER ONATE AND THE ITALIAN PAINTER CONRADI
WERE COMMISSIONED TO DECORATE THE PALACE. GENERAL CRESPO'S
RELATIVES WERE ITS FIRST OWNERS; IT LATER WAS PASSED ON TO
GENERAL GALAVIS. IT WASN'T UNTIL 1911 THAT THE PALACE WAS
BOUGHT BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF USING IT AS THE PRESIDENT

-
IAL RESIDENCE. THE STYLE IS COMPLETELY EUROPEAN;
FURNISHINGS AND DECORATION ARE IN THE FRENCH IMPERIAL STYLE.
IT HOUSES NUMEROUS WORKS OF ART, SUCH AS
ORIGINAL PAINTINGS OF THE VENEZUELAN MASTERS CRISTOBAL MENDOZA,
TITO SALAS, TOVAR Y TOVAR,MICHELENA AND OTHERS.
SOME ORIGINAL DETAILS DISAPPEARED DUE TO REFORMS DURING
GENERAL PEREZ JIMENEZ' REGIME, AND ONLY THE FACADE PRESERVES
THE ORIGINAL CHARACTERISTICS. BEFORE THE PALACE WAS
PURCHASED BY THE GOVERNMENT, THE ONLY PRESIDENT WHO ACTUALLY LIVED
IN IT WAS GENERAL CIPRIANO CASTRO. AFTERWARDS, SOME RELATIVES
OF GENERAL GOMEZ OCCUPIED CERTAIN AREAS OF THE PALACE.
ONE WAS JUANCHO GOMEZ, GOVERNOR OF THE FEDERAL DISTRICT

AND FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, WHO WAS
MURDERED IN HIS BEDROOM ON JUNE 29, 1923. THE PALACE NOW
NOW CONTAINS THE OFFICES OF THE PRESIDENT,
HIS CLOSE ADVISORS AND STAFF.
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 CARACA 02273 02 OF 02 091801Z

KEY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: THE PRESS, BRIEFING MATERIALS, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CARACA02273
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780106-0841
Format: TEL
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780389/aaaacxfr.tel
Line Count: 235
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 4b06d9ca-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3391511
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT: BACKGROUND MATERIAL FOR PRESS - GRAN MARISCAL DE AYACUCHO PART ONE DEALS WITH VISITS TO VENEZUELA BY PERSONS
TAGS: OVIP, SOPN, US, VE, (CARTER, JIMMY)
To: USIA STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4b06d9ca-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014